

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method for dynamically allocating a cost to an e-mail, the method comprising steps of:

forwarding by a first user, who is a member of an email group, said e-mail to a market engine for allocating a cost to said e-mail;

determining by said market engine the cost of said e-mail based upon intrinsic and extrinsic criteria, wherein the intrinsic and extrinsic criteria are defined by taking into consideration four parameters: positions of said first user and second users in a hierarchy of the email group; size of said email; subject of said email; subject of said email and device type for mail delivery; and wherein said extrinsic criteria is used for adjusting said intrinsic criteria for each parameter;

submitting the cost of said e-mail to said first user for agreement by said first user;

forwarding by said market engine said e-mail to [[a]] the second user in response to said agreement by the first user, wherein said second user is a member of the email group; ~~and~~

updating a credit account associated with said first user;

running said market engine as a central market engine including a user credit database which contains the credit accounts of all users and which is accessed by said central market engine when said market engine has to determine the cost of said e-mail; and

maintaining the credit account of each user in a credit database at a client device associated with said user, wherein said step of maintaining said credit account included in the credit database of said central market engine and the credit database at the client device

associated with each user further includes the step of providing for said user a number of credit points at some specific periods.

2. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of running said market engine as a local market engine when running at a client device associated with each user.

3. (Canceled) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of running said market engine as a central market engine including a user credit database which contains the credit accounts of all users and which is accessed by said central market engine when said market engine has to determine the cost of said e-mail.

4. (Canceled) The method according to claim 3, further comprising the step of maintaining the credit account of each user in a credit database at a client device associated with said user.

5. (Canceled) The method according to claim 4 wherein said step of maintaining said credit account included in the credit database of said central market engine and the credit database at the client device associated with each user further includes the step of providing for said user a number of credit points at some specific periods.

6. (Cancelled) The method according to claim 5, wherein said step determining the cost of said e-mail by using intrinsic and extrinsic criteria are further defined by taking into consideration four parameters being respectively, positions of said first and second users in a hierarchy of the group, size of said e-mail, subject of said e-mail and device type for e-mail delivery, said extrinsic criteria being used for adjusting said intrinsic criteria for each parameter.

7. (Currently amended) The method according to claim [[6]] 1, further comprising the step of defining said extrinsic criteria for said respective positions of said first and second users in the

hierarchy by a matrix wherein a value of each element $\alpha(i,j)$ associated with a sender i and a receiver j determined by the decision of a high level manager of said group.

8. (Currently amended) The method according to claim [[6]] 1, further comprising the step of defining said extrinsic criteria for the size of said e-mail by a matrix wherein a value of each element $\beta(i,j)$ associated with a sender i and a receiver j is determined by said receiver j .

9. (Currently amended) The method according to claim [[6]] 1, further comprising the step of defining said intrinsic criteria for the subject of said e-mail by a matrix^T wherein a value of each element $T(i,j)$ associated with a sender i and a receiver j is determined by a set of guidelines of said group.

10. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 9, further comprising the step of defining said extrinsic criteria for the subject of said e-mail by a matrix wherein a value of each element $\gamma(i,j)$ associated with sender i and receiver j for adjusting the value of the corresponding element $T(i,j)$ of said matrix^T is determined by said receiver j .

11. (Currently amended) The method according to claim [[6]] 1, further comprising the step of defining said intrinsic criteria for the device type by a matrix^D wherein a value of each element $D(i,j)$ associated with a sender i and a receiver j is determined by a set of guidelines of said group.

12. (Currently amended) The method according to claim [[6]] 1, further comprising the step of dynamically determining each of said extrinsic criteria by the administrator of the system based upon system information.

13. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of re-

prioritizing and repositioning said e-mail by said second user when it is received from said market engine.

14. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of providing said group as a large company and said users as employees of said company.

15. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of providing said market engine as a central market engine when running as a server.

16. (Currently amended) The method according to claim [[6]] 1, further comprising the step of dynamically determining each of said extrinsic criteria by the administrator of the system based upon system information.

17. (Currently amended) The method according to claim [[6]] 1, further comprising the step of dynamically determining each of said extrinsic criteria by the administrator of the system based upon system information ~~such as~~ comprising messages on special actions.

18. (Currently amended) A service for dynamically allocating a cost to an e-mail, said service comprising the method steps of:

forwarding by said first user, who is [[of]] a member of an email group, said e-mail to a market engine for allocating [[a]] the cost to said e-mail;

determining by said market engine the cost of said e-mail based upon intrinsic and extrinsic criteria, wherein said intrinsic and extrinsic criteria are defined by taking into consideration four parameters: positions of the first user and a second user in a hierarchy of the e-mail group; size of said e-mail; subject of said e-mail; subject of said e-mail and device type for mail delivery; and wherein said extrinsic criteria is used for adjusting said intrinsic criteria for each parameter;

submitting the cost of said e-mail to said first user for agreement by said first user;

forwarding by said market engine said e-mail to said second user in response to said agreement by said first user, wherein the second user is a member of the email group; ~~and~~

updating a credit account associated with said first user;

running said market engine as a central market engine including a user credit database which contains the credit accounts of all users and which is accessed by said central market engine when said market engine has to determine the cost of said e-mail; and

maintaining the credit account of each user in a credit database at a client device associated with said user, wherein said step of maintaining said credit account included in the credit database of said central market engine and the credit database at the client device associated with each user further includes the step of providing for said user a number of credit points at some specific periods.

19. (Currently amended) An article of manufacture for dynamically allocating a cost to an e-mail transmission within a transmission network, wherein a first user, who is a member of [[a]] an e-mail group, forwards the email to a second user who is a member of ~~said~~ the e-mail group; the article comprising a machine readable medium tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by a machine for implementing a method, the method comprising steps of:

forwarding by said first user said e-mail to a market engine in charge of allocating [[a]] the cost to said e-mail;

determining by said market engine the cost of said e-mail based upon intrinsic and extrinsic criteria wherein said intrinsic and extrinsic criteria are defined by taking into consideration four parameters: positions of the first user and the second user in a hierarchy of the e-mail group; size

of said e-mail; subject of said e-mail; subject of said e-mail and device type for mail delivery;
and wherein said extrinsic criteria is used for adjusting said intrinsic criteria for each parameter;

submitting the cost of said e-mail to said first user for agreement;

forwarding by said market engine said e-mail to said second user in response to the
agreement by the first user; ~~and~~

updating a credit account associated with said first user;

running said market engine as a central market engine including a user credit database which
contains the credit accounts of all users and which is accessed by said central market engine
when said market engine has to determine the cost of said e-mail; and

maintaining the credit account of each user in a credit database at a client device associated
with said user, wherein said step of maintaining said credit account included in the credit
database of said central market engine and the credit database at the client device associated with
each user further includes the step of providing for said user a number of credit points at some
specific periods.